

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12

NSAE-00 PA-02 SS-15 SP-02 TRSE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 /063 W

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O R 161738Z FEB 78

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0671

INFO USMISSION USNATO

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

UNCLAS ROME 3067

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, US

SUBJECT: ALLIED VIEWS ON U.S.FY 79 DEFENSE BUDGET

REF.: A. USNATO 01556, B. STATE 034523

1. THERE HAS BEEN NO SPONTANEOUS ITALIAN "REACTION" TO THE PUBLICATION OF THE FY 79 U.S. DEFENSE BUDGET. THE PRESS HAS VIRTUALLY IGNORED THE EVENT. THERE HAS BEEN NO OFFICIAL ITALIAN COMMENT ON IT. HOWEVER, IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WITH MEMBERS
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OF THE MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE WE HAVE ELICITED REMARKS OF A PREDICTABLE NATURE. THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO NATO IS CLEARLY REAFFIRMED IN THE BROAD RANGE OF ALLIANCE-SUPPORTIVE ELEMENTS CONTAINED IN BUDGET.

2. COMMENT: IT SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE THAT THE ITALIANS, FOCUSED NARROWLY ON WHAT IS PROBABLY THEIR MOST SERIOUS

DOMESTIC POLITICAL POLEMIC IN 30 YEARS, SHOULD NOT HAVE TURNED
THEIR ATTENTION TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE U.S. DEFENSE BUDGET.
THOSE MEMBERS OF THE MINISTRY ESTABLISHMENTS WHO DID TAKE NOTE
OF THE "NATO" BUDGET WERE NOT LIKELY TO VOLUNTEER A REACTION
THAT WOULD CALL ATTENTION TO THE WEAKNESS OF THE GOI PERFORMANCE
IN THIS AREA. NONETHELESS IT IS CLEAR THAT THOSE OFFICIAL
ITALIANS WHO HAVE TAKEN NOTE, WELCOMED THE U.S. DEFENSE BUDGET'S
EMPHASIS ON A REVIVED U.S. COMMITMENT TO THE SECURITY OF EUROPE,
AFTER WHAT HAD BEEN SEEN FOR SOME YEARS AS AN ORIENTATION
OF AMERICAN INTEREST ELSEWHERE.GARDNER

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Message Attributes

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